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(f) *Object*.—To promote amity, and preserve the peace. To soothe the wounded feelings of Hyrcanus—to mollify the sore that it might not break out again—by telling him, within the precincts of the temple, that (in the eyes of the nation) the one dignity is as great as the other; he has therefore, lost nothing; he has nothing to grieve about, nothing to resent, and nothing to make him break the covenanted peace.

TRANSLATION.

(1) Behold, how good and pleasant it is
For brothers to dwell together in unity!

(2) As the precious oil *descends* upon the head (i. e. the king¹), It descends upon the elder (i. e. the high priest), the elder of the house of Aaron¹; That descends (upon him) by his garments².

(3) *Their unity*, Like the dew of Hermon
That cometh down upon the mountains of Zion³;
Where the Lord commanded the blessing⁴.
Even life for evermore.

S. FYNE.

JEWS IN ROME, 1704.

THERE is a curious account of how certain Jewish families in Italy, after their "conversion" had been made secure by public baptism, merged with the Italian *noblesse*, in the following extract. It would be interesting if we could glean more information on such a subject, as it would bear directly upon the question how much the Jews were disliked as a race and not on account of their religion before the eighteenth century in Italy. The extract is taken from page 300 of the "Journal" of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury (died 1717), who kept a full diary of interesting observations during his travels from 1700-1706, the MS. of which, a well-written book, is now among the MSS. of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry at Montagu House.

1704, 13th March. 'This morning there was a great ceremony at St. Peters which I did not see. These Jews of Leghorn, a man, his wife, and daughter were made Christians. They were baptized by the Pope, confirmed by a Bishop and communicated by the Pope at his own Mass. The Queen of Poland [Marie de la Grange d'Arquien, widow of John Sobieski] was godmother and Cardinal Ottoboni stood for the Great Duke: Here they will have them

¹ See par. (c).² See par. (b).³ See par. (d).⁴ See par. (e).

to be rich, but I am certainly informed he was a broken Jew, and a proof of it is the Pope gives them a small pension. There is a law that if a Jew makes himself Christian, he forfeits his estate to the government. The reason given for so strange a law is that their estates being ill acquired by usury, they cannot in conscience enjoy them, but many imagine the reason is to discourage their conversion, for when they are Jews they pay much more taxes than when Christians. It is sayd that the Pope has now put out a Bull to repeal this Scandalous Law . . .

"I should observe that yesterday the Pope and Queen served these Jews at table, and that the first has given them his own Sirname, Albani; a thing usual in this country. Pope [Gregory XIII, 1572–1585] of the name Buon Campagni gave to a converted Jew his name, from whence descends the family of Buoncompagni now in Rome, and taken by many already to be of that Pope's blood. The family of Boromeo gave a Christianed Turk their name, and that very person, now the Duke of Bracciano's agent at Viena, passes for his near relation."

A. FRANCIS STEUART.

ZU DEM SENDSCHREIBEN DES NEĤEMIA GAON

(*J. Q. R.*, XIX, 104–106).

DIESES Sendschreiben, dessen Herausgabe wir dem lobenswerten Eifer Cowley's verdanken, schliesst sich an ähnliche Dokumente an, die ebenfalls aus der Geniza stammen und deren Autoren einerseits ein Urenkel des Zemah b. Paltoĵ (*J. Q. R.*, XVIII, 401; vgl. ib. 768) und Scherira Gaon (Saadyana, No. XLV; vgl. dazu mein "Schechters Saadyana," p. 5) in Pumbadita, andererseits Samuel b. Hofni (*J. Q. R.*, XIV, 308) in Sura gewesen sind. In ihnen allen wird die materielle Not der Hochschulen geschildert und über das Aufhören der Zusendung von Spenden geklagt, wobei die Schreiber fast alle auf das bisher herrschende gute Verhältnis zwischen den Vorfahren sich berufen (Urenkel des Zemah, fol. 42; NeĤemia, ll. 10–11; Scherira, fol. 2^r l. 14; die ersten zwei citiren sogar Prov. xxvii. 10). Bei keinem aber ist der Ton ein so flehentlicher, wie bei NeĤemia. Wahrscheinlich geriet die Hochschule in Pumbadita, infolge des Kampfes mit dem vorherigen Gaon, Aron ibn Sargado (s. Scherira, ed. Neubauer, p. 41), in eine sehr prekäre Lage und wir finden noch einen Nachhall dieses Kampfes in unserem Sendschreiben, wo Aron einfach als הנפטר (l. 10) bezeichnet wird und wo es heisst (l. 19): והודענכם החירוש שהיה לנו אחרי הנפטר בחזירת כל החכמים אלינו ושבתם לפנינו ושבועתם לנו והשוותם בנאותינו